

Empowering Women through Cell Phone Usages

Prompt Complaint Alert Method

March, 2014

 <p>8 240 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 * #</p>	 <p>8. استاد غیر حاضر۔ 8 لکھ کر 240 پر ایس ایم کریں</p>	 <p>7. جانور کی خرید میں نا انصافی۔ 7 لکھ کر 240 پر ایس ایم کریں</p>	 <p>7 240 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 * #</p>
 <p>10 240 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 * #</p>	 <p>10. ادویات کی فراہمی سے انکار۔ 10 لکھ کر 240 پر ایس ایم کریں</p>	 <p>9. ڈاکٹر غیر حاضر۔ 9 لکھ کر 240 پر ایس ایم کریں</p>	 <p>9 240 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 * #</p>
 <p>12 240 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 * #</p>	 <p>12. بیوی کو گھر سے نکل دیا۔ 12 لکھ کر 240 پر ایس ایم کریں</p>	 <p>11. عورت پر تشدد۔ 11 لکھ کر 240 پر ایس ایم کریں</p>	 <p>11 240 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 * #</p>
 <p>14 240 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 * #</p>	 <p>14. کم عمری کی شادی۔ 14 لکھ کر 240 پر ایس ایم کریں</p>	 <p>13. زبردستی کر لیا کسی کوشش۔ 13 لکھ کر 240 پر ایس ایم کریں</p>	 <p>13 240 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 * #</p>



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1. Women and Cell Phone

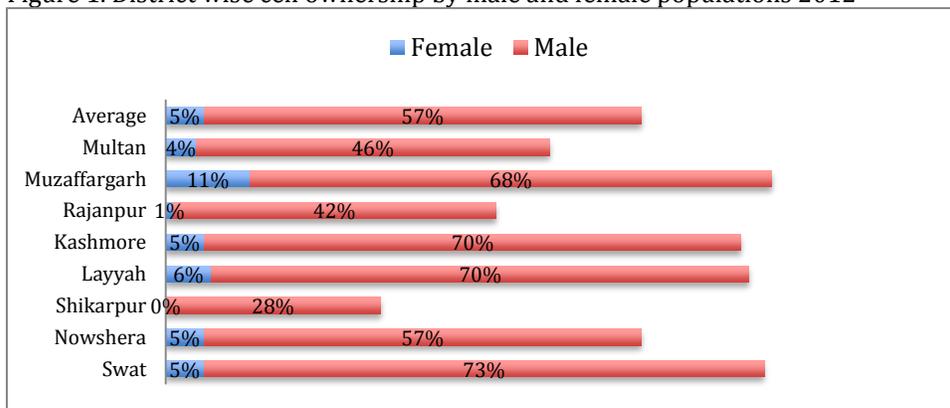
A tiny hand set called cell phone is a miracle device. It has helped to mobilise millions in order to overthrow dictators and to spread news promptly. But it has not been used effectively to make officials accountable in a collective way in so-called circumstances. Its ownership too is lopsided. In Pakistan according to our own Baseline Survey (2012) revealed that only 5% women owned cell phones, while 57% men had cell phones. This divide is a result of centuries old gender discrimination. Our women not only live in extremely secluded and segregated environment but also have no access to any kind of civil life¹. Festivals are meant for men, jirgas are run by men and the government offices are too dominated by men. Women have no access to information technology too. Overall. District wise percentages are given in Figure 1. In Shikarpur no woman and in Rajanpur only 1% women reported to have cell phone. During the Focus Group Discussions, many women reported they were not allowed to keep cell phone and those who attempted, faced some kind of violence.

Introducing the cell phones to the women in project locations was indeed a risky endeavor. But this step was worth taking the risk. However we managed to reduce the risk by developing a careful strategy. First, the male communities were taken into confidence. Second, the holder would not be able to make calls from the cell phone and it would be used only to send messages that are being approved by the communities. We also coated the women specific issues with larger community issues. This was done in order to prevent resistance from the male communities. For details see the list in Figure 5.

2. Prompt Reporting Through Short Message Service (SMS)

For Gender Governance Performance Scorecard (GGPS) the partners used paper and pen and this involved lots of efforts on distribution and collection of GGPS. To eliminate this cumbersome burden, we developed an easy SMS method for illiterate women to report cases of domestic violence and corrupt practices of government officials on experimental basis.

Figure 1. District wise cell ownership by male and female populations 2012



Source: PATTAN (2012) Baseline Survey

In this situation, the project staff managed to motivate men and women in the project locations to use cell phones for launching complaints about cases of violence against women and corruption and poor delivery of government services. In this regard members of Gender Reform Committees played a

1. http://www.pattan.org/data_files/UNDF-Baseline.pdf

pivotal role by accepting this responsibility. In total 200 women received cell phones under the project. At each location about four to five women received pre-coded cell phones. They were given training about usages of cell phones i.e. complaint codes and how to send messages to the portal.

Figure 2. Showing scope and scale of the usages of cell phones

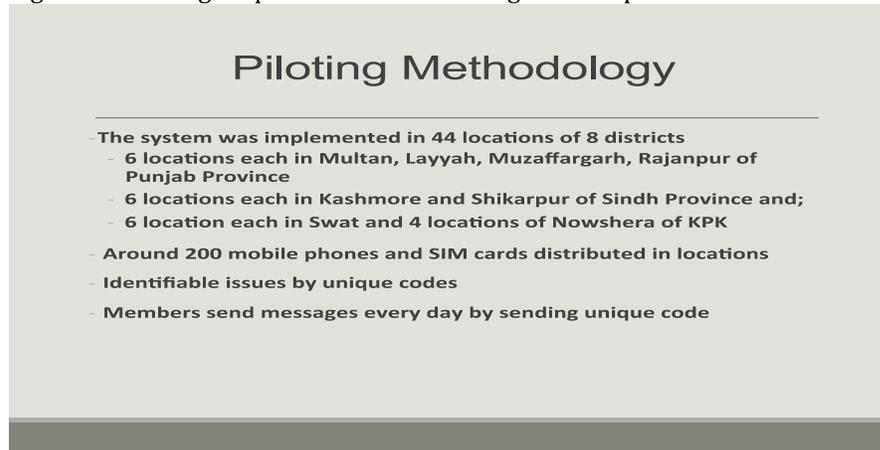
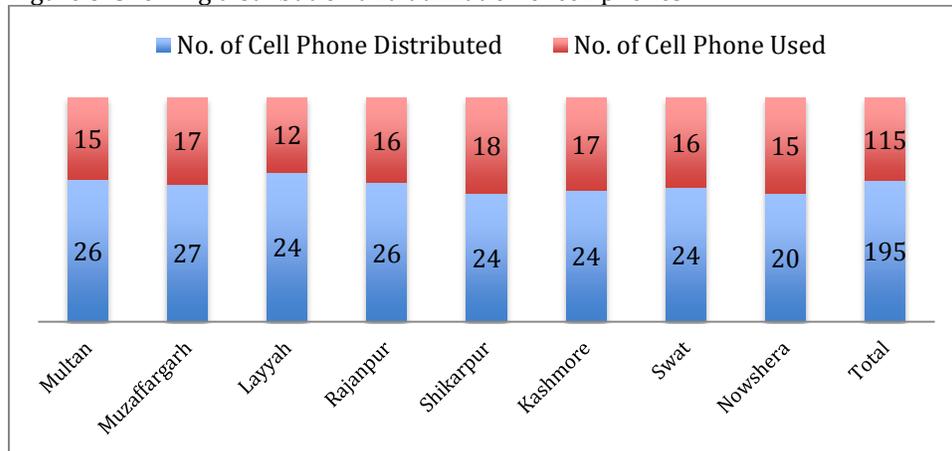


Figure 3. Showing distribution and utilization of cell phones



3. Information Cycle

The following figures explain each step of the SMS based complaint system.

3.1: Chart 1. Data Management and Updates

To update information in database using SMS or mobile app

- Transmission using SMS
 - Send message to server for up-date in defined format
 - Check the senders ID and cell number
 - If the ID and cell number match with geographical area (District), the information is queued for verification and further information updates
 - Message popup to verification officer
 - Verification officer calls coordinator for further information and verification
 - Data update by verification officer and save information
 - After verification and success full submission a message is sent to user for success full updates

- Transmission using mobile App
 - Login using secure connection from mobile app
 - Enter your mobile number on every login
 - Information system sends validation code
 - Update information using mobile app and enter the validation code
 - After success full submission a message is sent to user for success full updates

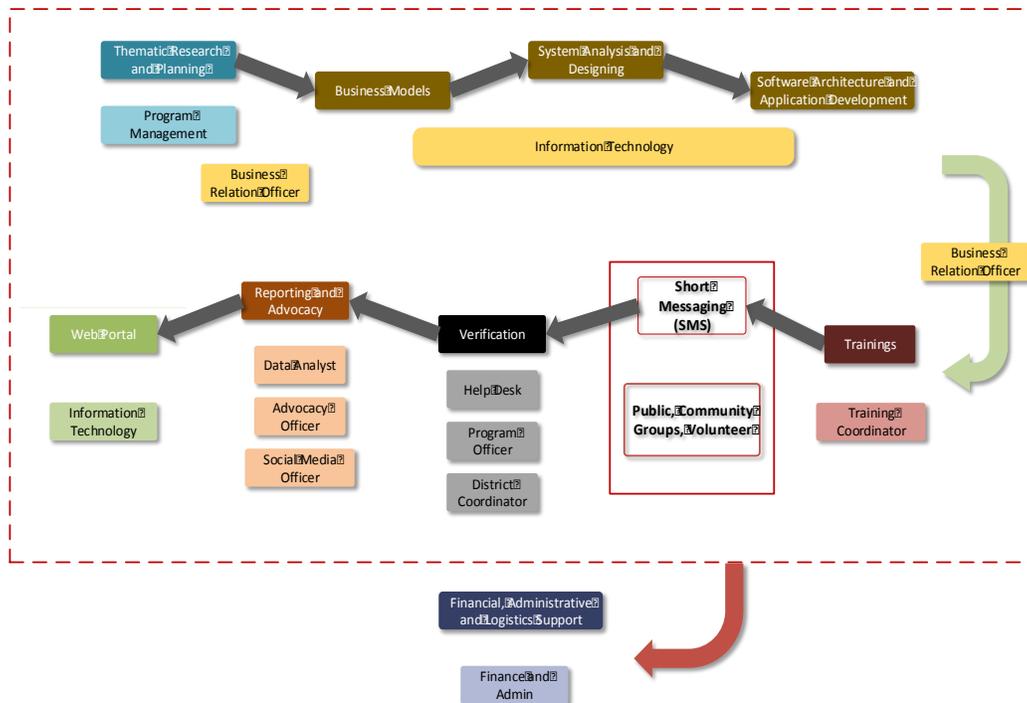
3.2. Chart2. SMS Transmission and Verification Methodology

SMS/data submission and verification

- Registered user send message to information system from mobile phone using SMS or mobile apps
- Information system asks to reply with options, if one is using SMS. Whole cycle will complete once all options are replied by user
- In case of mobile app all options are available to user to respond
- Information system sends message to coordinator for verification
- Coordinator has to reply with option verified (**Ver**) or not verified (**Never**) either case
- Pop-up message to help/verification desk
- Voice call for further verification and information updates
- Data update by verification officer and save information
- Information system sends a message to coordinator with success full updates
- Message (every week) is forward for advocacy
- End of the day consolidated report is sent to stakeholders and authorities for their concern via email, SMS and post in official forums.

3.3. Chart 3

Chart 3: Process Flow



4. Reported Grievances

In total the cell holders sent 2,701 complaints. Two-third complaints were made about poor governance and about one-third consisted of violence against women. For instance, as many as 19% and 18% reported about 'teachers absent from schools' and 'forced to pay bribe' respectively. About 13% complaints were about 'absence of doctors from duty'. Sadly, about 11% complaints were about 'depriving daughters from getting education'. During the project duration, general elections took place in Pakistan. In Pakistan a number of coercive methods are used to force voters to cast their ballots for certain candidates. Therefore, a significant number of such complaints were made through the cell phones too.

Interestingly, both the GGPS and SMS based datasets show that large majority of complaints were made about health and educational departments. The use of coercion and intimidation has been in practice in rural and remote areas and it continued in this election too. Therefore, it is not surprising that more than 5% complaints were reported about use of intimidation and coercion during the polling. Since, only women had cell phones, even these complaints may be considered as violence against women. Rest of the reported cases of various kinds of violence adds up to almost one-third of the total complaints. See Figure 3.

Figure 4. Showing overall percentage of complaints

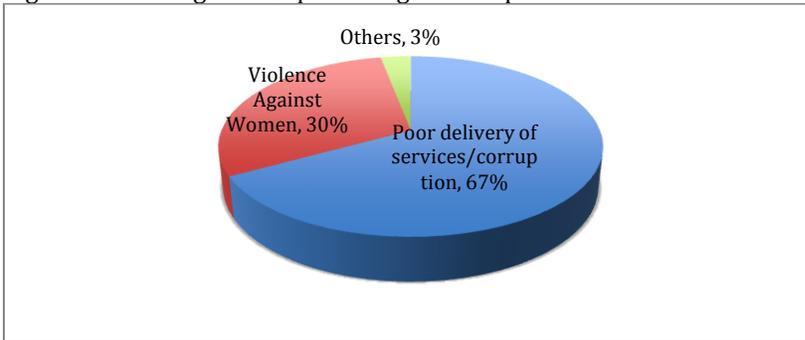
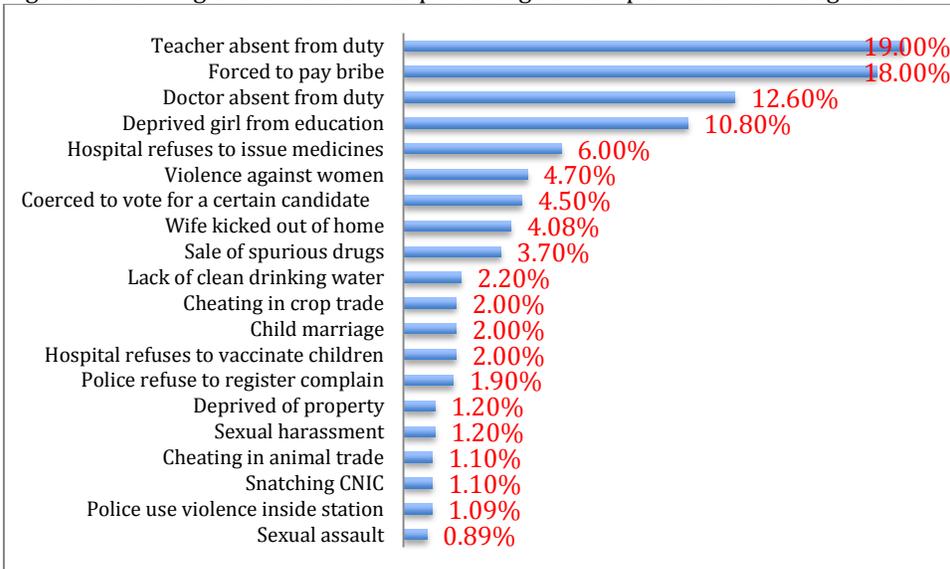


Figure 5. Showing overall issue wise percentage of complaints sent through SMS



5. District wise situation

The district wise analysis shows that in most districts most complaints were made about absence of teachers and doctors from their respective duties. Also issue of bribery emerges as one of the three major problems. In the following figures district wise percentages are given about SMS based complaints.

Figure 6. Showing situation in Multan



Figure 7. Showing situation in Rajanpur

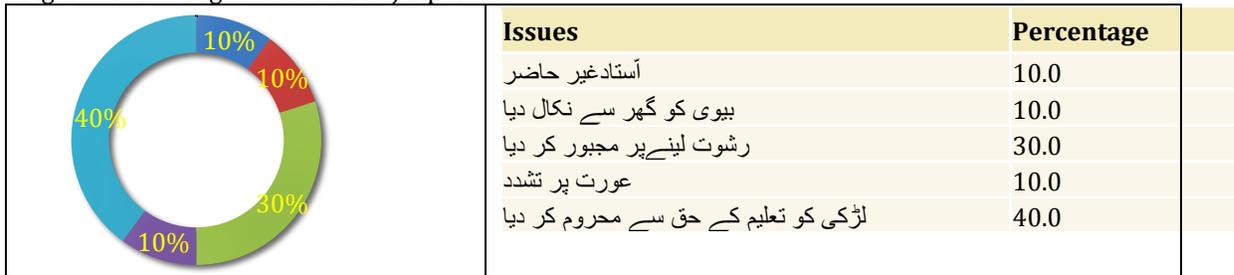
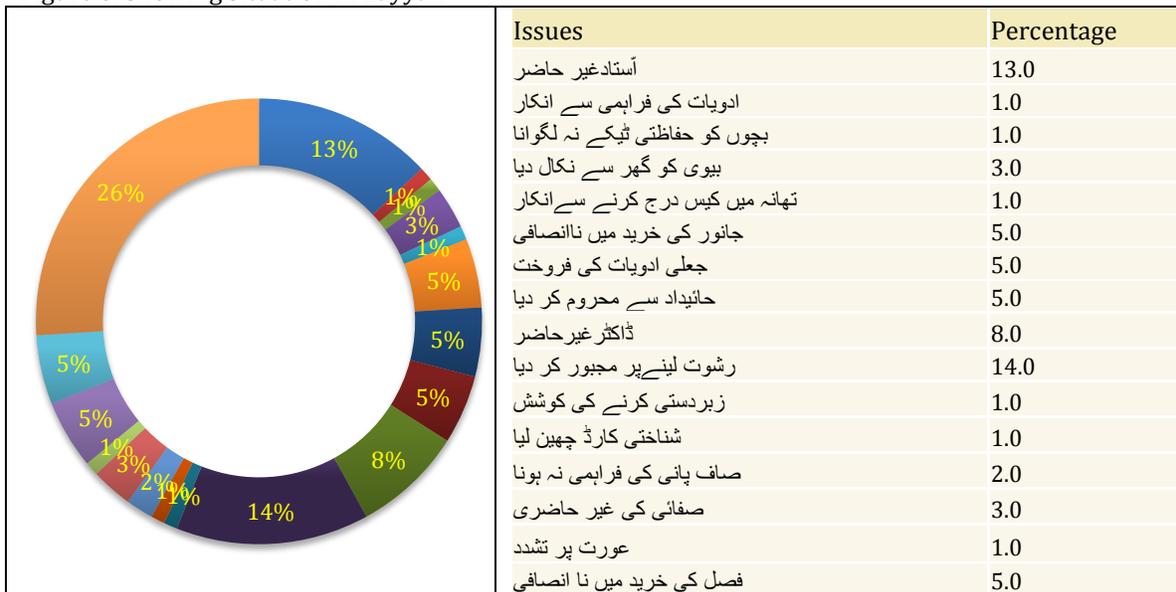


Figure 8. Showing situation in Layyah



لڑکی کو تعلیم کے حق سے محروم کر دیا	5.0
ووٹ ڈالنے کے لئے دھونس اور دباؤ ڈالا	26.0

Figure 9. Showing situation in Kashmore

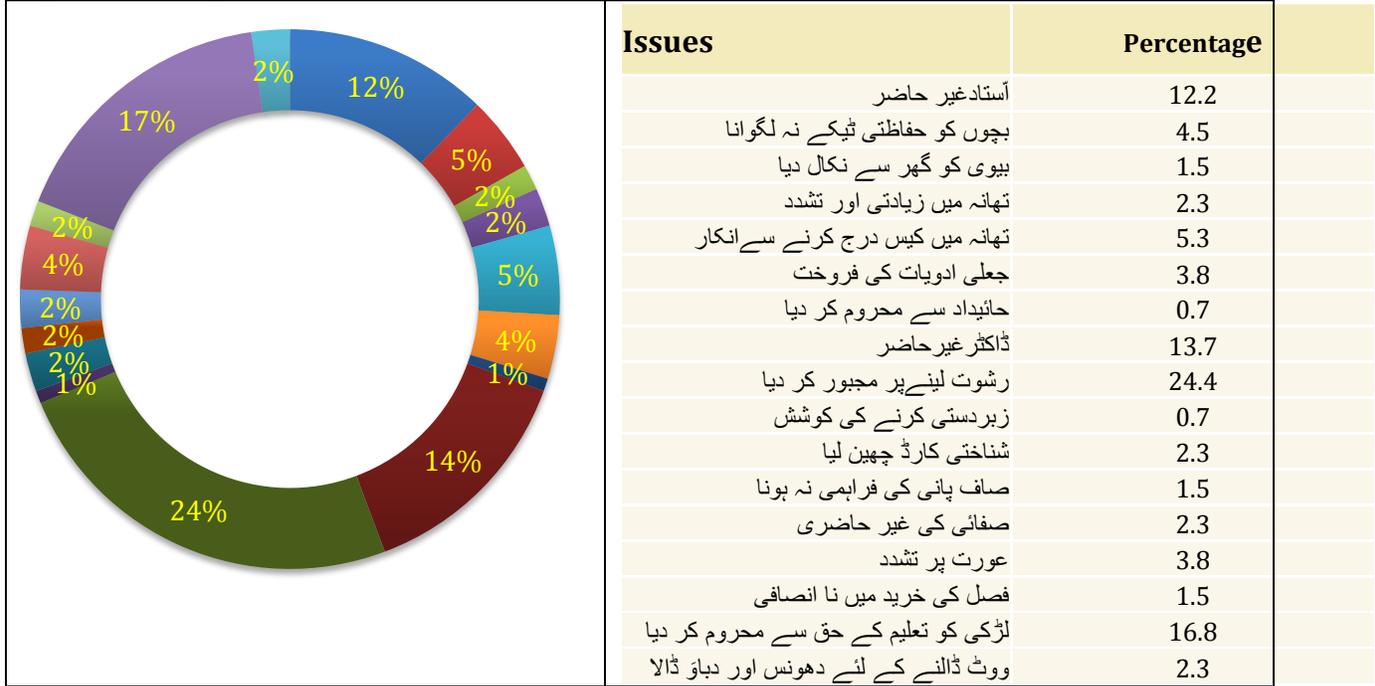


Figure 10. Showing situation in Shikarpur

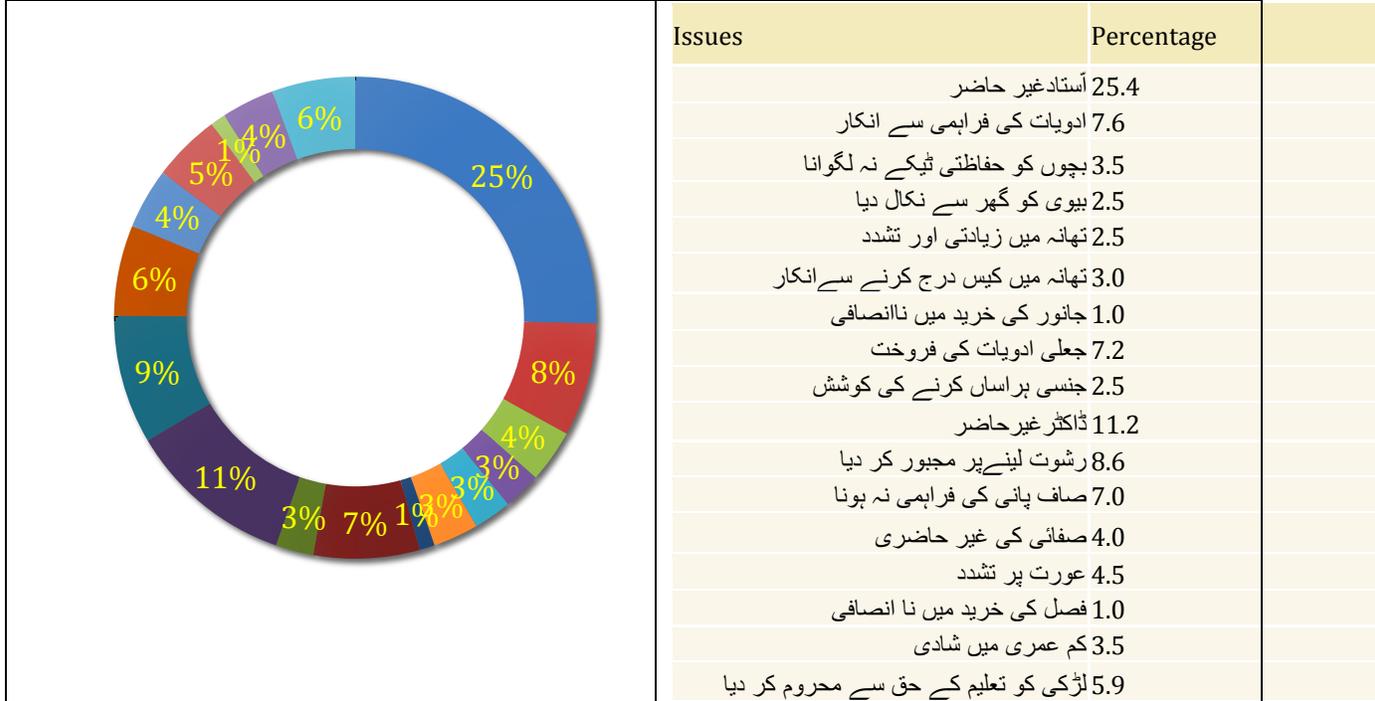
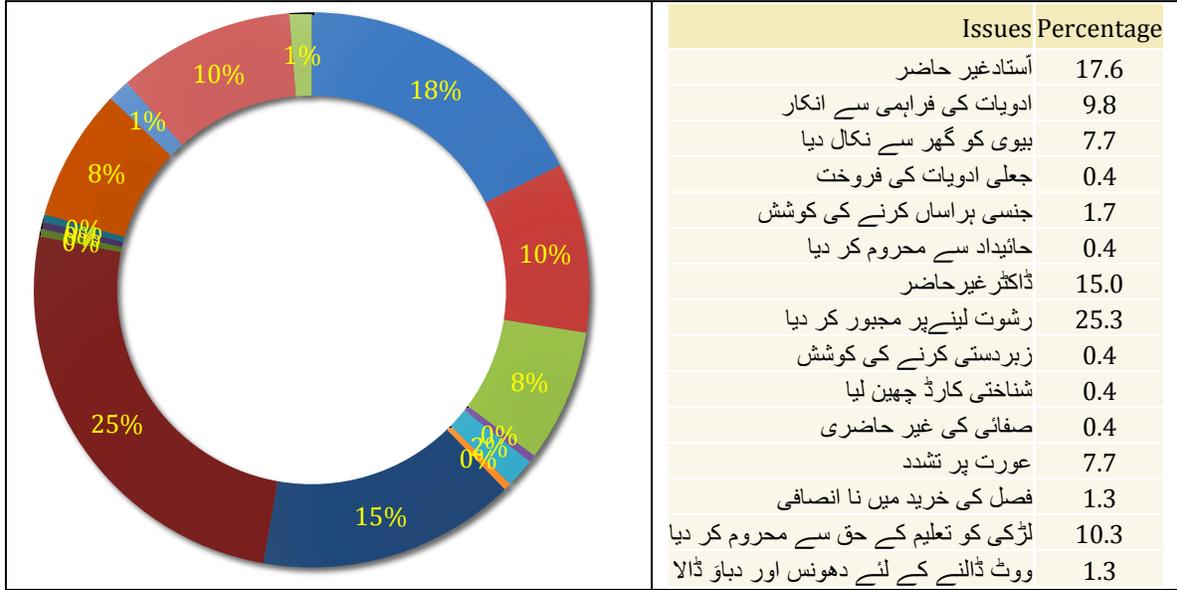


Figure 11. Showing situation in Nowshera



6. What next?

We are planning to scale up this system to five thousand cell owners by end of 2014 will strive add another ten thousand in 2015. The nature of grievances may be changed in consultation with the users of the system. In our view this will be the most effective mean to make officials accountable.